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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 30, 2017

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**CITYWIDE MENTAL HEALTH STEERING COMMITTEE TAKES STEPS ON POLICE REFORM,
MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS RESPONSE**

*West Side Outreach Project trains more than 500 community
members in mental health symptoms and how to respond*

Mayor Emanuel today announced another step forward in the city's efforts to improve crisis response for individuals with mental illness as part of the city's ongoing police reform efforts that includes strengthening mental health crisis response. Over the last eight months, more than 500 community members in Austin, Garfield Park and North Lawndale have received free mental health awareness training to reduce stigma and provide information on emergency response resources.

"Effective training is another a critical part of our continued police reform efforts and ensuring that the city is providing an effective and compassionate mental health emergency response," said Mayor Emanuel. "Over the past year, the city has advanced mental health training that takes a holistic look at all aspects of the response. By not only training police officers and 911 dispatchers and call takers on effective emergency response, but also training the community on mental health symptoms and resources available, we can reduce stigma and better meet the needs of individuals who may be experiencing a mental health crisis."

The successful pilot trained more than 500 west side residents in awareness and identification of the signs and symptoms of a possible mental health crisis. In addition, residents learned about support services available from the City and community organizations, including the option to request a specially trained Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) trained police officer in the event of a crisis.

"We know that individuals who have experienced trauma are more likely to face mental health challenges and engage in risky behaviors," said Chicago Department of Public Health Commissioner, Dr. Julie Morita. "The early results of our efforts of improving crisis response through trauma-informed practices show promise that with evidence-based training and interventions we are better able to identify, serve and ultimately treat those individuals with mental health challenges during a crisis."

The pilot project grew out of Mayor Emanuel's Citywide Mental Health Response Steering Committee, a coordinated effort to address how the city's first responders can better serve individuals with mental illness. The goal was to free mental health training to 400 community

members in partnership with schools, faith-based institutions and community organizations in the west site.

"These results show evidence that this approach to addressing stigma and improving crisis response may be an effective way to engage communities in the solution." said Kelly O'Brien, Executive Director for The Kennedy Forum, which advocates for ending stigma and discrimination against people dealing with mental health and addiction challenges. "We recommend that trainings be expanded to additional communities."

The University in Chicago (UIC) Jane Addams College of Social Work is spearheading an evaluation of the effectiveness of this training and presented an interim report to West Side Outreach Project organizers. UIC researchers confirmed that the preliminary results of the pilot show decreased stigma associated with mental health and addiction, increased knowledge and comfort in contacting a CIT trained police officer, increased knowledge about mental health and increased confidence that they could assist someone in need. Additionally, of the 296 people who participated in the study, a majority, approximately 70 percent, said that either they personally have, or a family member has, experienced mental health challenges.

"These results are significant and indicate the community trainings are having an impact," said Amy Watson, PhD, UIC Jane Addams College of Social Work faculty who led the evaluations. Trainings were offered to faith leaders, school staff and staff and volunteers from community based organizations. UIC led the pre-and-post evaluations of the effectiveness of the trainings, which were provided by Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago: Center for Childhood Resilience, Laynie Foundation, National Alliance for Mentally Ill (NAMI) Chicago, Presence Health, Sinai Health System: Under the Rainbow, Thresholds and Trilogy Behavioral Healthcare. The pilot is funded through the Chicago Department of Public Health.

"There are service calls that an officer may respond to involving individuals who are experiencing some type of mental health crisis," said Police Deputy Superintendent Kevin Navarro. "Participating in this effort is part of our commitment to changing how we police in Chicago and making sure that individuals suffering from these crises receive treatment in a hospital and not a jail cell."

The final report from UIC will be released early 2018 and will include additional findings to determine if the trainings resulted in referrals to community mental health services and increased requests for CIT trained officers in these communities.

The Citywide Mental Health Response Steering Committee includes representatives from Mayor's Office, Chicago Police Department, Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC), Chicago Fire Department, Chicago Department of Public Health, NAMI Chicago, The Kennedy Forum, Thresholds, Mount Sinai Health System and University of Illinois at Chicago. The Steering Committee continues to meet monthly to address its goals of improving training, increasing access to social services, reducing the stigma of mental health, educating the public on mental health first response, and collecting better data on outcomes.

West Side Outreach Project partners include: Advocate Health Care, Alderman Burnett, Alderman Ervin, Alderman Mitts, Alderman Scott, Alderman Taliaferro, Anixter Center, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago: Center for Childhood Resilience, BBF Family Services, Bethany Fund,

Blue Cross Blue Shield Illinois, Bobby E. Wright Comprehensive Behavioral Health Center, Catholic Charities, Chicago Area Project, Chicago Department of Public Health, Chicago Police Department, Chicago Public Schools, Chicago Urban League, Cook County Health and Hospitals System, Gateway Foundation, Hartgrove Behavioral Health, Health and Disability Advocates, Hope Community Church, I Am Able, Interfaith Mental Health Coalition, The Kennedy Forum Illinois, Laynie Foundation, Loretto Hospital, Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, MADO Healthcare, Marshall High School, Michael Reese Health Trust, NAMI Chicago, Next Level Health, Presence Health, Primo Center, St. Anthony's Hospital, Sandy Hook Promise, Sinai Health System, Thresholds, Trilogy Behavioral Healthcare, Westside Community Stakeholders, Westside Health Authority, and University of Illinois-Chicago.

These efforts build on citywide initiatives to improve how emergency responders respond to incidents. This has included training police officers and all OEMC 911 call takers and dispatchers in CIT and de-escalation. These efforts helped increase the number of CIT officers dispatched to mental health-related calls more than seven-fold over last year.

The full report can be found here: <http://thekennedyforumillinois.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Interim-Report-Westside-Community-Outreach-Pilot-Project.pdf>

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